

Winter 2025-2026



**NEW
VILLAGE
ARTS**

Creating adventurous
artistic experiences to
awaken the human
spirit since 2001





From Chicken Coop to Jazzercise, NVA History!

By Kristianne Kurner
Founder & Executive Artistic Director



Four Play Cast in 2001

On New Year's Day, 2001, I was walking with my family along the sea wall in Carlsbad and was surprised to run into Nikolai and Mimi Tsankov, friends from graduate school in New York in the mid 1990s. We had a nice catch-up and then started talking about how much I was dreaming of starting a professional theatre company in Carlsbad, a town that I had never lived in myself, but my family had since the 1950s and joyful holidays took place here. Nikolai was an actor (most recently in Kathryn Bigelow's *A House of Dynamite* on Netflix) and Mimi an attorney and they instantly offered their help. Mimi would go on to do our non-profit corporation paperwork for us pro bono and in April of 2001 New Village Arts was officially launched.

In September of 2001, just a few weeks after 9/11, New Village Arts had its first public performance: an evening of new playreadings by graduates of the Actors Studio Drama School cheekily called *Four Play* at the Carlsbad Cultural Arts Center. Interspersed with the playreadings were actors reading emails from friends who were in NYC on 9/11. The actors included our founders (me and Francis Gercke), founder of Carlsbad Playreaders Pat Hansen, Stacey Martino, Scott Beehner, Chris Conner, and a special appearance by Tony-winner Julie White. It was an evening focused on bringing the community together after a most tragic event.



The Granary

The first full theatrical production of New Village Arts was Cindy Lou Johnson's *Brilliant Traces*, which was performed in a converted chicken coop. Really. The Granary is an historical building in Carlsbad's Magee Park and the 25 audience members were invited into the space with a blanket on each chair and went on a wild ride as if they were in a cabin in Alaska in the middle of a massive snowstorm. The production was hailed by critics and NVA was named the "most exciting new theatre company" in San Diego.

After that performance, we didn't know where we were going to end up and were fortunate to be introduced to the people who run Jazzercise. NVA spent the next five years creating plays in the studio space in the corporate headquarters of the dance fitness company. Those five years allowed NVA to build its reputation with patrons, critics, and the City of Carlsbad. We also had the incredible women who run Jazzercise as our mentors, specifically Judi Sheppard Missett and Sally Baldrige, with Jack Missett being an inaugural member of our first acting company. NVA became known for edgy works by authors like Sam Shepard and creative reimaginings of classics by Chekhov and Shakespeare (during this time we also did a FREE *Shakespeare in the Park* in local Carlsbad parks every summer!)



2787 State Street pre-renovation!

We continued dreaming of having our own space to grow and be able to do shows on a more consistent basis. Everytime I walked by the old Bauer Lumber Company building at 2787 State Street in Carlsbad Village I would say, "that space should be a theater!" The building was owned by the City of Carlsbad and I applied to use it as a theater three times. The third time was the charm and in 2006 the City Council voted to allow NVA to fill the space with theater. We renovated the space thanks to leading gifts from Jack and Valerie Cumming and the PC Chao Foundation and officially opened



The Full Monty (2014)

in June of 2007 with a production of Sam Shepard's *True West*. Fun fact: the A/C was not working on opening night and we rushed across the street to Fiesta Liquor to buy bottled water for everyone and we used our programs as fans!

Since then, we have produced 110 productions in Carlsbad Village, including unforgettable performances of *The Full Monty*, *Oklahoma!* and *The Color Purple*, and the first production outside of London and Broadway of Jez Butterworth's epic play *The Ferryman*. In January of 2023 we re-opened after a major renovation as the Dea Hurston New Village Arts Center, named in honor of the woman with the most profound impact on the theatre community in San Diego. We are proud to create adventurous artistic experiences in the heart of Carlsbad Village and look forward to the next 25 years!



Oklahoma! (2016)



Jez Butterworth's *The Ferryman* (2023)

New Village Arts Administrative Staff

Founder & Executive Artistic Director / Kristianne Kurner (she/her)
Artistic Producer / Kali Boston (she/her)
Incoming General Manager / Trevor Rex (he/him)
Patron Services & Development Manager / Bre Eugenio (she/her)
Manager of Marketing & Communications / Olivia Pence (she/her)
Events & Engagement Manager / Paige Chadwick (she/her)
Bookkeeper / Lanette Granger (she/her)
Technical Manager / Marcus Rico (he/him)
Resident Stage Manager / Nathan Waits (he/him)
Bar & Facilities Manager / Tom Agosta (he/him)
Daytime Box Office Representative / Ainsley O'Bryan (they/she)
Graphic Designer / Annie Tykwinski (she/her)
Marketing Intern / Gwyn Torio (they/them)
Master Electrician & Master Rigger / Nick Timm (he/him)

Front of House Staff

Tom Agosta / Gabriela Chavolla / Anna Duchi / Renee Fegan / Gwyn Torio / Ken Saragosa / Frida Villeda

Production Volunteers

MaryKate Reeves-Hoche / Jeffrey Peter Snell

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Vice President / Milena (Sellers) Phillips
Treasurer / Peggy Maher
Secretary / Christa Meathe

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Lisa Balderston / Denyce Carter / Jessica Hurston / Gary Karelis / Mary Kerr, Leave of Absence / Kristianne Kurner / Katie Keller / Lou Storrow / Daniel Watts / DeMilo Young
Emeritus Board Member, Scott White

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Chair, Monica Martin / Christine Davis / Kathy Deering / Haley DiDonato / Shawntá Fleming / Paul Hays / Richard Kuranda / Cassie Langan / Amber Liggon / Gina McBride / Julie Nygaard / Justin Peek / Shari Roberts / Jay Sarno / Julie Sarno / Becky Sciglimpaglia / Don Sciglimpaglia

We acknowledge that The Dea Hurston New Village Arts Center operates on the unceded land of the Payómkawichum (Pye-om-ko-wi-chom) (Luiseño) and Kumeyaay peoples. We further acknowledge that NVA was founded upon exclusions and erasures of many Indigenous peoples, including those who are the traditional Custodians and First people of the land on which we work, play, gather, share, and learn. New Village Arts honors the over 20,000 current tribal members living in the San Diego area, and promises to create a safe space for the local Native Communities to share the art, accomplishments, and history of their peoples. This is a starting point in our efforts to be more active in our local communities and we acknowledge that we have much further to go.

Pictured on Cover: The Color Purple - 2024



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The Mission

of New Village Arts (NVA) is to create adventurous artistic experiences to awaken the human spirit.

We provide:

- a collaborative and inspiring home for performing and visual artists
- a forum for laughter, discussion, and deeper thinking within our community
- a training ground for future generations of art-makers and art-lovers

Thank you to our donors!

City of Carlsbad • Jack & Valerie Cumming • Jazzercise • K.A. Keller • Prebys Foundation • Ray Charles Foundation • Sahm Family Foundation • Scott & Donna White / City of San Diego's Board of Supervisors • Patrick Farley • Ginn Family Foundation • Janet Heidorn • Laura & Dave Kurner • Judi Sheppard Misset & Jack Misset • Brian & Victoria Myers • Nordson Corporation Foundation • Don & Becky Sciglimpaglia / 5 North Media • Conan Construction • Peggy Maher Doherty • Elevo Education • The Hurston Family • Mary & Jack Kerr • Parker Foundation • Jay & Julie Sarno / Bridge Philanthropic Consulting • Mark Coulombe • Bill & Judy Garrett • Kenneth Dudley Kebow • Larry Low & Mikayla Lay • Sondra Kay Morison & Brian Watts • Larry & Laurie Weinberger • Youths Friends Association / Harry & Kim Arnett • Kathy & Robert Brombacher • BWE, Inc. • Janell Cannon • Joan & Doug Cumming • Kathy & Bill Deering • Five Alarm Security • David K. Jordan • Kristianne Kurner • Christine Lakeland • David Macy-Beckwith • M. Wesley Marx & Judith Marx • Dr. Dee Silver • Mark Silver & Katherine Michaud • Dr. Christy Rosa • Peggy Ann Wallace • Jason Whooper / Carl & Colette Burke • Kay & Chris Byrnes • Ellen H. Cherin • June Chocheles • Will & Lynn Cooper • Susan Fancher • Merryl Goldberg • Tanya & Mike Griffiths • Dr. Michael & Harriet Humphrey • Ksenia, Lena & Rose • Cassie Langan • Aymeric, Grace & Max Lecanu-Fayet • Barbara & Griff Lewis • Philip Lurie • Trudy Mangrum • Sydney Harris & Barbara Mannino • The Marr Family • Lory & John McGregor • The Moriarty Family • Dwayne Ashley & Daniel Munguia • Marilyn Myers • Elaine M. Nielsen • Marianne & Mike Pekala • Milena (Sellers) Phillips • Barbara & Stan Rubin • Candace Sage • Don Stump & Sarah Shealy • Jacques Spitzer • Alan & Eve Stall • Kirt & Leslie Stephenson • Rosie Turner-Marks • Tanya Sternberg • Louis Storrow • Jane LaFazio & Don Strom • The Swaniker Family • Erica Marie Weisz • Will & Sally Willis • Barbara & Bill Weiler • Maria & Randy Zack / Diana Slaughter Aaron • Anonymous • Connie Bagley • Susan Genbrowski Baker & Rex Baker • Cathy Baron • Brenda Beckett • Drs. Karen & Gordon Bishop • Jill M. Bruzga • Mike Carson • Jeff & Sherry Davies • Paige DeCino • N.Joy Deshow • Bill Eadie • Maria Esguerra • Gene & Joyce Evenskaas • Mrs. & Mr. Kelly S. Fehrenbach • Patricia Flaherty • Yvonne & Carm Finocchiaro • Dr. Moneé Gardner & Trent Gardner • Beth Urech & Mark Gillingham • Lanette Granger • Alexandra Kritchevsky & Jonathan Graff • Kathy Hagenbach • Julie Halliday • Andie Harvey • Jamie Henson & Robert Houskeeper • Maxine Hesse • Daniel Jáquez • John & Marla Jensen • SJ Kalian • Elizabeth Kaufmann • Jo & Dean Kessler • Jenna Ingrassia Knox & AJ Knox • Elizabeth Krudenier • Bob & Karen Lennon • Bob Lin • Carlton & Sandy Lund • Jackie Mazur • Karen Haynes & Jim Mickelson • Paul & Julie Nygaard • Marilyn Campbell & Jessica Padilla-Bowen • Jenni & Kim Prisk • Mr. Garey Willard Ramey & Mrs. Vallerie Ann Ramey • Tom Daugherty & Jacquelyn Ritz • Deborah Rossi • Roy Sekigahama • Stephanie Sides • Terry Sonnack • Kitty Sparrow • Edward Parish & Anne Speraw • Karen Seal Steward • Judith Swan • Marla Stevens & Ralph Thomas • Leslie Todd in honor of George Todd • Marty & Vern Ummel • Rich & Sheri Walls • Daren & Robin White • Judy Woienberghe • Chris Wood • Katrina Zynda • The Smith Family in honor of Pat & Jim Hanson ♥



Who we are & what we do

By Trevor Rex
Incoming General Manager

New Village Arts was founded on the idea that art is for everyone. Today we are a living village of artists, audiences, donors, volunteers, and staff who believe that adventurous art matters. We make theatre in relationship with the people around us, and we measure our success not only by what happens onstage, but by what happens between people when they are here together.

In our village, artists are not visitors. They are neighbors. We support them to take creative risks, to stretch toward excellence, and to tell stories that feel alive and important in this moment. Our audiences are not passive observers. They are part of the event. Every laugh, every held breath, every standing ovation is a reminder that theatre is something we create together in real time. The work is adventurous because it asks us to be present with each other, and because it trusts that a shared story can open us up to empathy, wonder, and honest conversation.

Our home, the **Dea Hurston New Village Arts Center**, is built for that kind of closeness. It is a space where you are never far from the story or from the people sharing it with you. Having two stages under one roof allows our village to stay active year-round, welcoming new voices and new audiences into our Village. The building holds performances, yes, but it also holds first meetings, reunions, difficult talks, celebratory nights out, and the quiet kind of healing that happens when someone feels seen by a story. This is what it means to be a village. We gather. We return. We belong.

People do return, in beautiful and varied ways. Each year tens of thousands of patrons walk through our doors. Some have been with us for decades and know our rhythms by heart. Others are discovering live theatre for the first time. In our Village, both matter equally. We love the longtime supporters who help sustain our work. We love the newcomers who bring fresh energy and curiosity. We love the families who make theatre part of their traditions, and the solo patrons who come in needing a night that feels meaningful. Their presence keeps Carlsbad Village vibrant, not only economically, but emotionally. Our community grows stronger when it has a place where people regularly gather for shared experience, and we are proud to be that place.

Our village is guided by art for all and our commitment to that ensures everyone can enter our Village and feel genuinely welcome, whether they are onstage, backstage, or in the seats. Inclusive art is a responsibility that we don't accept lightly. Equity, diversity, inclusion, and anti-racist practice shape how we choose stories, how we build teams, and how we care for our community. Adventurous art matters most when it reflects the full richness of the world we live in and when access to it is real, not theoretical.

That is who New Village Arts is right now. We are a living village that gathers for brave stories and shared humanity. We are artists and audiences taking the leap together. We are donors and volunteers holding the doors open wide. We are staff making sure the village stays strong, welcoming, and alive. We believe adventurous art matters because we see what it does here, night after night. It brings us closer. It wakes us up. It helps us remember that we belong to each other.



Singin' in the Rain (2023)

Mainstage Productions on the Ray Charles Stage

By Kali Boston
Artistic Producer



NVA Staff at the Ray Charles Foundation Offices



Dea Hurston & Dr. Valerie Ervin, President of the Ray Charles Foundation at the Naming Ceremony!

The renaming of the Ray Charles Stage at New Village Arts has become one of the most meaningful milestones in our company's history. Ray Charles' legacy is defined by brilliance born from perseverance, an artist who transformed American music through innovation, discipline, and an unwavering belief in the power of art to connect people. His life reminds us that greatness doesn't come from abundance; it comes from intention, authenticity, and the courage to create with what you have. At NVA, we see that reflection every day. We are a small but mighty organization, not scrappy, but deeply intentional. With limited resources, we choose purpose over excess, craft over convenience, and community over ego. Our values echo Ray's own journey: that artistry thrives when passion is greater than circumstance, and when vision is carried forward by people who care fiercely about the work. The Ray Charles Stage stands as a constant reminder of that truth. It is more than a name; it is a beacon for the kind of theatre we strive to make; bold, grounded, soulful, and built from the heart.

Where Are They Now?

A Look Back on a few of NVA's Artists

EDRED UTOMI



BRIAN ABRAHAM



NATHAN (RILEY) KILGORE

EDRED UTOMI

The Nutcracker (2014) to *Hamilton* on Broadway

BRIAN ABRAHAM

Picasso at the Lapin Agile (2009), *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* (2013) to *Life of Pi*, *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child*, and *Oedipus* on Broadway

NATHAN (RILEY) KILGORE

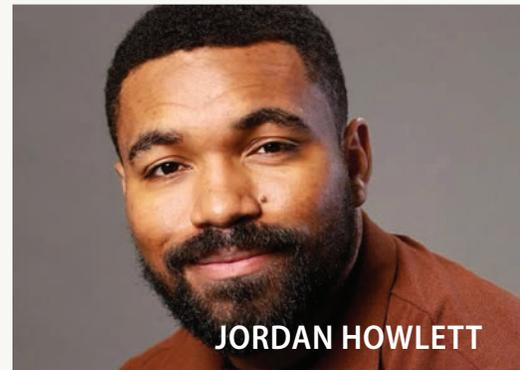
Forever Plaid & Plaid Tidings (2012) to *Lion King* on Broadway

JORDAN HOWLETT

Assistant Stage Manager in *Forever Plaid* (2012) to social media sensation with millions of followers

JOSH BRADFORD

From *Lord of the Flies* (2015) to this year's *RENT!*



JORDAN HOWLETT



JOSH BRADFORD

Recent Season Highlights

JEZ BUTTERWORTH'S THE FERRYMAN (2023)

- World premiere outside of Broadway and the West End
- Full cast of 24 - plus a live rabbit and goose!

"A lively and fast-moving production that's thoughtfully directed by Kristianne Kurner and studded with exceptional performances"

—Pam Kragen, The San Diego Union-Tribune

Named Most Ambitious Production of 2023 by David Coddon, San Diego Theatre Critic Circle

AWARDS & NOMINATIONS

NOMINATED San Diego Theatre Critics Circle for Outstanding Dramatic Production

NOMINATED San Diego Theatre Critics Circle for Outstanding Scenic Designer: Doug Cumming

NOMINATED San Diego Theatre Critics Circle for Outstanding Featured Performance in a Play: Dagmar Krause Fields

SINGIN' IN THE RAIN (2023)

Singin' in the Rain became a true audience favorite, charming houses with its dazzling choreography, heartfelt performances, and pure Golden Age joy. Overflowing with nostalgia and showstopping talent, the production reaffirmed NVA's commitment to creating unforgettable theatrical experiences for the Carlsbad community.

AWARDS & NOMINATIONS

WON San Diego Theatre Critics Circle for Outstanding Featured Performance in a Musical: Audrey Ward

NOMINATED San Diego Theatre Critics Circle for Outstanding Choreography in a Musical: Jenna Ingrassia-Knox & Katie Banville

FUN HOME (2024)

Fun Home resonated deeply with audiences, especially our queer community, through its honesty, vulnerability, and beautifully human storytelling. With packed houses, powerful word-of-mouth, and heartfelt post-show conversations, this production became a meaningful space for visibility, healing, and celebration. A true Village triumph.

AWARDS & NOMINATIONS

WON San Diego Theatre Critics Circle for Outstanding Youth Performance: Lena Palke in Fun Home & Miracle on 34th Street: A Live Musical Radio Play

NOMINATED San Diego Theatre Critics Circle for Outstanding Resident Musical



NVA is committed to making theatre accessible for all. Through our partnerships with VetTix and ArtsTix, we offer affordable third-party ticket options for veterans, families, and local audiences. Thanks to the Dea Hurston Fellowship, we also have a limited supply of complimentary student tickets, expanding cultural access and supporting the next generation of theatre-makers.



Fun Home (2024)

"Working with New Village Arts has been an invaluable part of my development as an artist. For early-career designers like myself, NVA provides incredible opportunities to take on ambitious projects that sharpen our craft and expand our sense of what's possible. I deeply value their commitment to producing bold, impactful work, where every production I've joined has been equal parts challenging and artistically fulfilling. The team at NVA is supportive and genuinely trusting of its artists. NVA fosters a true community, one that I keep returning to because the work and the relationships that we make here really matter."

–Michael Wogulis, Scenic Designer for multiple NVA shows, including *Miracle on 34th Street: A Live Musical Radio Play*, *The Thanksgiving Play*, and many more!

THE COLOR PURPLE (2024)

The San Diego Regional Professional Premiere of *The Color Purple* was a landmark success, celebrated for its emotional depth and stunning production design. With overwhelming community praise, this storytelling triumph affirmed NVA's commitment to presenting bold, resonant, and culturally essential work on the Carlsbad stage.

AWARDS & NOMINATIONS



NIO RUSSELL

Photo Credit: San Diego Critic Circle

WON San Diego Theatre Critics Circle for Lead Performance in a Musical: Nio Russell

NOMINATED San Diego Theatre Critics Circle for Outstanding Direction of a Musical: Kandace Crystal

NOMINATED San Diego Theatre Critics Circle for Lead Performance in a Musical: Hadiyyah Noelle

*"I had the privilege of working at NVA on *The Color Purple*. The project was a challenging learning curve in my abilities as a performer. I was able to grow as an actor and singer with the support of the creative team throughout the rehearsal process. *The Color Purple* will always remain an important turning point in what I consider possible for myself and I am grateful to have been a part of it."*

–Nio Russell, *Celie* in *The Color Purple*

MOUNTAINTOP (2025)

The *Mountaintop* earned powerful acclaim for its gripping performances of the bold reimagining of Dr. King's final night. Audiences and critics alike praised its emotional impact and thought-provoking storytelling, cementing the production as one of NVA's most resonant and timely theatrical achievements.

"Picture perfect."

–Carol Davis, *Carol's Theatre Reviews*

*"If you want to be moved by eerily prescient words, spoken by Broadway-quality actors, supported by emotionally-provocative projections and sound-effects, *The Mountaintop* is a must-see production!"*

–Zoe Lynn T., *Audience Survey*

"Directing at New Village Arts was a dream fulfilling experience. From day one, I felt set up for success. NVA provided me an environment that was encouraging, safe, and supportive. I truly felt free to be my most creative, and I believe the product on stage showed that I was. Everyone from the front of the house to the back and everywhere between contributed, often in ways that couldn't be seen, but were certainly felt. They truly make me proud to say I had my directorial debut at New Village Arts. I got to have my directorial debut...at home."

–Durwood Murray Jr., *Director of The Mountaintop*

Sahm Foundation Arts Education Center



Did you know that NVA started as a professional theatre and acting school? The first productions of the organization were funded by proceeds from our acting classes. Since those early days, NVA has gone on to have a thriving education program with groundbreaking programs for teens and young adults with neurodiversity and other special needs, and senior citizens, including those struggling with Alzheimer's and dementia.



Mainstage Players

The Mainstage Players is a professional training program for teens and young adults with neurodiversity that has been transforming lives at New Village Arts for over 10 years. 13.9% of U.S. adults have a cognitive disability, yet most of their artistic experiences are limited to therapeutic programs rather than professional careers, leaving a major gap in opportunity and representation. NVA bridges that gap by providing professional training, performance experience, and inclusion in our subscription shows on the Ray Charles Stage, as well as Improv Sketch classes like "Monday Night Live!" Programs like these not only teach skills but also empower these artists to shine in the community.

MAINSTAGE PLAYERS TESTIMONIAL

The Showcase by Grace Lecanu-Fayet (mother of participant Max)

Ten minutes to places.

A small audience gathers. Families and friends exchange smiles and hellos.

Five minutes to places.

Six young adults sit off stage, waiting for their cues. Lines have been memorized, scenes blocked, character motivations analyzed.

The stage is set in the lobby of New Village Arts. The director finalizes last minute details. The actors prepare to do what they have trained eight weeks to do, perform. To them, there is nothing unusual about this event. They have worked hard and a live audience is their reward.

Lights Up.

Autism. Down's Syndrome. Disabled. Special Needs. That is what most audiences would see in the actors waiting to take turns on stage. Labels. Shorthand for histories that take too long to explain, and require too much patience to listen to. My son is one of those actors. I'm here to support him, his friends, and the program that allows them the opportunity to do something they enjoy...being part of a story, being on stage, being seen for something other than a label. In this environment, they are actors. Plain and simple.

The first actor recites his monologue. The next actor begins. As I watch the performance unfold, I'm pulled into the experience. They are so in the moment, so sincere, so unapologetically themselves that I dare not look away. Their words are not the point. Their presence is what matters. It proclaims, "I'm here. I'm part of this world. I matter. Just as I am."

My son performs halfway through the show. I marvel at how he can stand on stage without fear, how he can recite all those words without effort. He is giving it his all to express emotions on stage that do not come naturally to him off stage. I see the same level of dedication and effort in each actor, every performance.

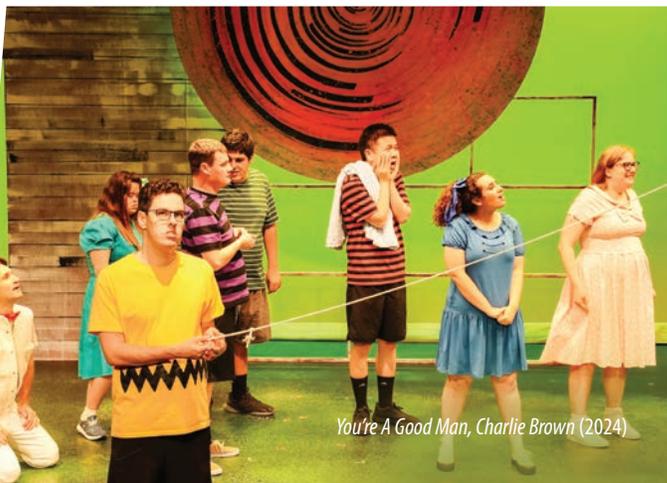
Curtain Call.

The troupe takes a collective bow and receives their well-deserved applause. Today, they have claimed their rightful place in the spotlight. No labels. No disclaimers. They are unafraid to get up on a stage and be exactly who they are. How many among us can say the same? After today's performance, alternative labels come to mind.

Creative, Courageous, Resilient, Free. I have much I can learn from them.

The Mindful Theatre

The Mindful Theatre program at New Village Arts creates fun and meaningful artistic experiences with local senior citizens. There are currently two programs running: The Silver Singers, a choir led by Beatrice Mojtahed (Crosbie) that rehearses weekly in the NVA lobby and then tours local senior living communities twice a year; and Mindful Theatre, an improvisation class for seniors living with Alzheimer's and dementia. Founder Kristianne Kurner was inspired to start the class when her own father was facing Alzheimer's and his neuropsychologist shared that improvisation was one of the best ways to improve quality of life and bring joy in what can be a most challenging time.



You're A Good Man, Charlie Brown (2024)



Scene Study for Seniors class (2023)

Silver Singers

By Laura Kurner

NVA co-founder and lifelong supporter

"IT WAS THE FIRST TIME IN A LONG TIME THAT I FELT LIKE ME!"

The Silver Singers had just provided a musical experience for the residents of a senior living facility and, as always happens, a woman had come up to me to express her gratitude.

The Singers' group members are all over 55 ourselves. The New Village Arts sponsored program has given participants the opportunity to be ourselves and contribute in ways that have gone beyond our expectations. Silver Singers offers us an opportunity to sing as part of a group and to give back to others by providing music and cheer to senior residences throughout San Diego's North County. During the performance, and after a few songs by the group alone, residents are invited to sing along—which they do with gusto! Afterwards, group members mingle with the audiences, who often share amazing life stories and happy memories. I find it especially rewarding when we sing in the memory care area, which often doesn't get to participate in special events. Watching initially blank faces light up with joy and recognition as we sing familiar songs from the past touches my heart!

Conductor Bea Crosbie Mojtahed creates a lovely warm and positive environment, and I am truly grateful to New Village Arts for providing such a fulfilling opportunity!



Improv Hub of North County

NVA is quickly becoming the Improv Hub of North County, thanks in large part to the growing success of our weekly Improv Drop-In Class with Patrick McInnis. Every week, improvisers of all experience levels step into a supportive, joy-filled space to discover the fundamentals of improvisation: spontaneity, active listening, collaboration, and play. Patrick's signature Fundamentals of Improv Series (Levels I-V) has also become a cornerstone of our education programming, offering a clear pathway for students to deepen their craft while building confidence both on and off stage. With each session, our Village grows...new faces, new skills, new stories, and an ever-expanding ensemble of artists committed to saying "yes, and" to creativity.



Virtual Film Club

By Milena (Sellers) Phillips

CELEBRATING 5 YEARS!

The film club was founded in 2020 as a heartfelt response to the isolation of the COVID-19 shutdown. Also deeply affected by the murder of George Floyd, and the social issues it exposed, the club focuses on films many members may not have seen. A wide variety of Black classics, dramas, comedies, documentaries, and stories exploring Black history, civil rights, and the broad contributions of Americans of African heritage in fields such as science, education, physics, law, agriculture and film, are individually viewed by members and discussed together via Zoom.

Members watch each film with the intention of sharing what resonated with them: emotional moments, new insights, and personal or family connections. The discussions are lively and inclusive, with participants offering background on the actors, related films, historic events, and thoughtful opinions in a respectful, open dialogue. Club members come from all walks of life, and several original members remain part of the group today.



THE NVA FILM CLUB IS OPEN TO ALL!





Silver Singers on Tour (2025)



Improv with Patrick McInnis



Patrick's Wednesday Drop-in Improv Class

White Family Next Stage

By Paige Chadwick
Events & Engagement Manager

A drag performer with voluminous, styled hair is captured in a dynamic pose on stage. They are wearing a black suit jacket over a patterned shirt and a red and black striped tie. The performer is holding a black hat with a decorative pattern. The background is a vibrant, colorful mural with abstract shapes in shades of blue, yellow, and red. The lighting is dramatic, with strong highlights and deep shadows.

The White Family Next Stage, our 67-seat cabaret space located in New Village Arts' lobby, is the vibrant heartbeat of the local artistic community. While our Mainstage brings you world-class seasonal productions, the Next Stage serves as the ultimate creative incubator. This intimate, flexible, and chic space is home to a dazzling array of local performances. From immersive dance experiences to raw stand-up comedy showcases, from album release shows to variety hours- we ensure there truly is something for everyone. It's where new voices and wild ideas find their audience. It's a place where emerging artists are nurtured, established creators take risks, and audiences become collaborators in the artistic process. If you want to witness the future of performance- vibrant, diverse, and uncompromising in its quality, the White Family Next Stage is where to find it.

Improv Comedy Show

In January 2024, Patrick McInnis began teaching improv at New Village Arts, drawn to the theater's commitment to celebrating diverse voices and its strong sense of community. As a Carlsbad realtor who has been teaching improv for nearly 15 years, he was especially grateful for the overwhelming support from NVA patrons—people willing to try something new, step into the unknown, and laugh together. Since March of '24, he's produced monthly *Improv Comedy Shows*, welcomed over 200 students into weekly drop-ins and leveled classes, and partnered with Jefferson Elementary to bring improv to young performers. Patrick's *Improv Comedy Show* troupe has collaborated with theaters across San Diego, sold out multiple shows, and created quarterly welcoming community performances that offer meaningful stage time to anyone eager to grow. While improv in North County isn't new, the energy at New Village Arts has sparked one of the most vibrant, unified, and supportive improv communities in the region. If you're curious what that feels like, come visit—we'll save you a seat in 2026!

Dad Skeleton's Comedy Variety Hour

Dad Skeleton Comedy began producing shows at New Village Arts in early 2024 and has gained a dedicated and eccentric North County following, all thanks to the Next Stage. Dad Skeleton specializes in sketch and character comedy that rivals Saturday Night Live. They were named one of San Diego Fringe Festival's Top 15 Shows to See 2024, were nominated for Best Writing in the San Diego 48 Hour Film Festival, and are so proud to call NVA their North County home! Their NVA show, Dad Skeleton's Comedy Variety Hour, helmed by Paige Chadwick and Jacob Rozansky, is a claw machine of transgressive talent that brings together the best performers San Diego has to offer in a whirlwind of comedy, music, and good taste. NVA has been a wonderful partner due to their pristine facilities, excellent staff, and prominent standing in Carlsbad as a one-of-a-kind performance venue for independent artists. We hope that these revues bring opportunities to emerging artists as well as one-of-a-kind offerings to North County.



Dad Skeleton (2024)

Opera à la Carte

Opera À la Carte San Diego is a women-run organization dedicated to making opera accessible, affordable, and deeply connected to the San Diego community. Their mission is to showcase exceptional local talent, create new opera lovers, and bring meaningful storytelling to audiences of all backgrounds. New Village Arts has been their creative home for 2½ years, offering the intimate, welcoming space where artists and audiences truly connect. *Opera À la Carte's* monthly programming at NVA features a rich blend of opera, musical theatre, and classical art song, allowing performers to shine across genres while giving audiences a broader, more inviting experience. This variety helps newcomers discover what they love and keeps longtime patrons engaged with fresh, dynamic concerts. This year, they celebrated major milestones: producing their second full opera, *Orpheus in the Underworld*, to critical acclaim; performing at Bella Vita Fest in Little Italy; sharing music in donation-based concerts at libraries across San Diego County, including Encinitas and 4S Ranch; and continuing to grow one of NVA's favorite recurring series.

Cozmic Comedy Stand-Up Showcase!

Produced by

Mz. Reka and Zuleika Moreno

Cozmic Comedy is more than a stand-up show: it's a celebration of laughter. This comedy show was created to spotlight diverse voices and real stories from comedians who turn life's challenges into humor. This show believes in inclusion through expression. By laughing together, we dissolve barriers and create community! We all have our troubles, but when we share them through comedy, we create out-of-this-world laughter. The show is co-produced by Mz. Reka, a proud Indigenous Moorish American. She tactfully weaves together her thoughts, observations, and life experiences, creating her own unique comedic style. She has a passion for comedy and reveals that it is the best thing that she has done for herself in a mighty long time! Co-producer Zuleika Moreno is a first-generation Afro-Latina American raised in a military family, giving her a global perspective shaped by travel throughout her youth and professional career. Her comedy reflects the humor and heart found in cultural fusion, resilience, and discovery. The host, Miles Otaway, is an Englishman whose sharp wit delivers jokes with charisma, charm, and a touch of cheek.





Non-Subscription Events on the Ray Charles Stage

I Can Cook, Too

"Finding a theatre that values inclusivity and community is of the utmost importance to me, and NVA is exactly that. From the moment I set foot into this beautiful theatre, even just as a patron, I was embraced by a warm and welcoming atmosphere that made me feel right at home. It has been truly inspiring to be a part of their productions (*The 39 Steps*, *Thanksgiving Play*, and my one-woman show, *I Can Cook, Too!*), and I'm so very grateful they are entrusting me to bring another new cabaret creation to life, *Mistletoe Melodies*, this holiday season on the *White Family Next Stage*. Why is NVA so special? They are dedicated to showcasing diverse perspectives and voices which not only enriches an audience's experience but also allows actors (like me!) to grow and thrive in a supportive and safe environment. The sense of belonging and collaboration has made my time at NVA incredibly fulfilling; both professionally and personally; many-a life-long friendship has been made here. I am incredibly thankful to be part of the New Village Arts fam, and I sincerely hope to see them flourish so I can continue working with them in the future."

—Erica Marie Weisz

I Can Cook, Too (2025)



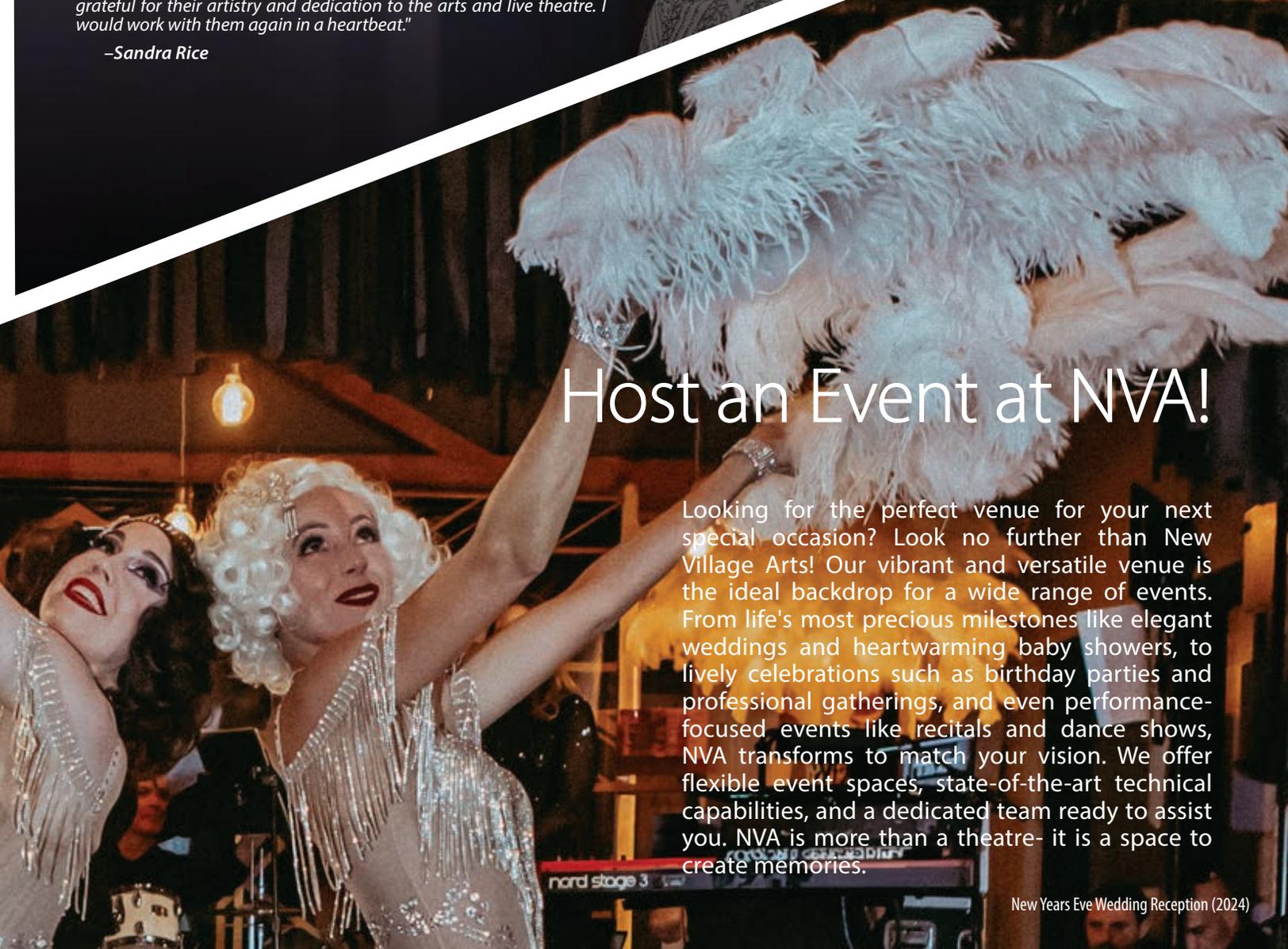


Love, Linda

"Collaborating with New Village Arts was an absolute joy. Their professionalism and unwavering support helped bring my vision of "Love, Linda. The Life of Mrs. Cole Porter" to life. I was especially impressed with the tech crew, as their precision, flexibility, and calm expertise made every run-through seamless and every performance shine. I was deeply moved by NVA's community and patronage as they embraced myself and the show with enthusiastic and positive reactions. My entire experience at NVA left me inspired, confident, and deeply grateful for their artistry and dedication to the arts and live theatre. I would work with them again in a heartbeat."

—Sandra Rice

Love, Linda (2025)



Host an Event at NVA!

Looking for the perfect venue for your next special occasion? Look no further than New Village Arts! Our vibrant and versatile venue is the ideal backdrop for a wide range of events. From life's most precious milestones like elegant weddings and heartwarming baby showers, to lively celebrations such as birthday parties and professional gatherings, and even performance-focused events like recitals and dance shows, NVA transforms to match your vision. We offer flexible event spaces, state-of-the-art technical capabilities, and a dedicated team ready to assist you. NVA is more than a theatre- it is a space to create memories.

New Years Eve Wedding Reception (2024)

Fellowships, Apprenticeships, and Internships



ABOUT DEA HURSTON

New Village Arts had the profound honor of working alongside the late Dea Hurston, a visionary arts leader who passed away on July 7, 2024. For over 30 years, Dea was a driving force in San Diego's arts ecology as an underwriter, arts commissioner, and community advocate.

As a young girl, Dea was denied access to music lessons and artistic opportunities due to the racist attitudes and laws of her time. She transformed those early barriers into a lifelong mission: to open doors for others. Dea championed opportunities for women and artists of color, such as actors, directors, designers, and playwrights, and she left an indelible mark on the region's arts landscape.

In January 2023, we proudly dedicated our building as the Dea Hurston New Village Arts Center, marking it as the first arts center in the United States outside of New York to be named in honor of a Black woman. Dea's legacy also lives on through the Dea Hurston Fellowship, which provides paid training, mentorship, and professional artistic opportunities for women, BIPOC, and other underrepresented theatre artists and students in San Diego.

Dea's impact endures every day, in this building, in our programs, and in the countless lives she touched.

The Dea Hurston Fellowship (DHF) Addresses Three Main Categories:

- **PROFESSIONAL ARTISTS AND ADMINISTRATORS**
The professional artist and administrator program supports the hiring of BIPOC artists in professional theatres in San Diego County.
- **COLLEGE STUDENTS**
The college program focuses on creating professional opportunities for BIPOC, women, and other underrepresented theatre artists currently in college.

DHF covers stipends for these emerging artists to work in local professional theatres and gain mentorship from them.

- **HIGH SCHOOL**

The high school program focuses on accessibility to the arts for students in high school. The DHF provides free tickets to shows, education from industry professionals, and mentorship opportunities. The DHF will give priority to students from lower income/higher diversity schools.

Testimonials from Dea Hurston Fellows:

"The Dea Hurston Fellowship was transformative to my art practice. I appreciated the time and space the fellowship provided that allowed me to learn and focus on my craft. NVA staff was very supportive, offering the tools and freedom to collaborate and explore new ideas. 10 out of 10 experience!"

—Miki Vale (2024-2025 Hurston Fellow)

CHECK OUT MIKI'S BOOK, IN LIEU OF FLWRZ, CREATED AS A COMPANION TO THEIR TIME IN THE FELLOWSHIP!

"The professional fellowship granted me the opportunity to cultivate my artistry on my own time as well as working within the theatre. I am grateful for how much it grew me and for the chance NVA gave me to create and put up work at their theatre"

—Lilea Alvarez (2024-2025 Hurston Fellow)

"Through the Dea Hurston Fellowship at New Village Arts I was able to learn and grow skills that will help me immensely on my theatre journey. I absolutely loved getting to work with everyone and meeting one on one with my mentor really helped me hone my skills and learn new techniques that I wouldn't have gotten otherwise. I truly enjoyed the program stage managing "You're a Good Man Charlie Brown" was a dream come true. I thank NVA and the Dea Hurston foundation for this opportunity and for welcoming me into their theater!"

—Isabel Regan (2023-2024 Hurston College Fellow)



For The Loved Ones (2025)

ANTHONY PHIFER-COLLINS STAGE MANAGEMENT FELLOWSHIP

The Phifer-Collins Stage Management Fellowship provides hands-on production experience for early-career theatre professionals pursuing a career in stage management. Through this fellowship, we aim to support the next generation of diverse theatre artists and provide access to professional experiences for ANYONE that has the passion for creating a career in the theatre.

"The Stage Management Apprenticeship at New Village Arts has been monumental in advancing my future career as a Stage Manager. NVA has cultivated my skills, knowledge, and expertise to be able to flourish in any situation. Since the first rehearsal, I felt deeply supported through every aspect and felt valued in what I could bring to the table. NVA encourages you to speak out, ask questions, and let your voice be heard. Being part of this company has inspired me to take risks, grow my skills, and gave me experiences that I will follow throughout my entire theatre career."

–Jeruel Canda, Phifer-Collins Fellow

ADMINISTRATIVE INTERNSHIPS

The NVA Administrative Internship provides immersive, hands-on experience, offering emerging arts professionals a front-row seat to the daily operations of a thriving cultural hub. Interns collaborate directly with the New Village Arts team, contributing to a wide range of administrative and creative projects that support our season programming.

NVA COLLEGE ACTING APPRENTICESHIP

The NVA College Acting Apprenticeship is a production-centered training program crafted for emerging college-level performers. Apprentices step directly into New Village Arts' professional season, earning academic credit while sharing the stage with seasoned theatre-makers. With opportunities across leading, supporting, and ensemble roles, this program offers invaluable real-world experience that sharpens skills, elevates résumés, and forges lasting connections within the professional theatre community.

Participating Colleges:



In Lieu of Flwrz (2025)



In Lieu of Flwrz (2025)

NVA to Celebrate 25 Years of Impact in 2026

The Cultural Heart of Carlsbad

MAY 9 GALA

SILVER ANNIVERSARY

25 YEARS!

IMPACT

COMMUNITY

QUARTER CENTURY

PERFORMING ARTS

LEGACY

ARTISTIC EXCELLENCE

ART MAKERS

CELEBRATION

CHANGEMAKERS

ART LOVERS

CARLSBAD VILLAGE

PROFESSIONAL THEATER

RENT (2025)

NVA Silver Anniversary Celebration—Mark your calendars for May 9, 2026!

How do you celebrate 25 years of award-winning theater productions and community impact?

You plan a year of celebration and a big party to honor the City and the people who got you there.

New Village Arts Silver Anniversary Celebration— May 9, 2026

The evening will be chaired by Jazzercise director and NVA Board Member, Christa Meathe and highlight the contributions of the people and the community that have inspired 25 years of artistic excellence at New Village Arts.

"Being part of the New Village Arts 25th Anniversary Gala is an incredible honor. As someone who has lived and worked in this community for more than 13 years, I've seen firsthand how the performing arts spark connection, inspire inclusivity, and bring a sense of adventure to our shared story. The arts truly fill my soul, and supporting NVA's mission reminds me just how much magic happens when a community comes together to celebrate creativity."

—Christa Meathe, 25th Anniversary Gala Chair

In celebration of its 25th Anniversary, NVA will present three awards for the first time:

- **EXCELLENCE IN PHILANTHROPY AWARD**
Recognizing individuals, corporations or foundations for outstanding commitment and impact in supporting New Village Arts
- **FOUNDER'S AWARD**
Presented to someone who makes a difference by supporting other artists, building community, and participating in the creation of art as broadly defined
- **COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP AWARD**
Recognizing an individual or organization that has made a difference in Carlsbad by inspiring action, creating positive change, and improving the quality of life for all

In early 2026, the organization will announce the Changemakers of New Village Arts, a group of people in the community who are changing Carlsbad with their good work. These are people who have had an impact at NVA or in Carlsbad with their innovative approaches to business, their commitment to community, and/or their investment in NVA or the Carlsbad Village area. Changemakers will be announced at a special patron event early in the year. At its core, New Village Arts is about two things, artistic excellence and building community. The 25th Anniversary year will celebrate those ideals and highlight the performances and people who make it all possible.

For more information about the Patron Event, the Silver Anniversary Gala, or to join the gala or 25th anniversary committees, please contact Trevor Rex at trevor@newvillagearts.org.

If you would like to make a difference at NVA by making a financial commitment in honor of the next 25 years or by becoming an event sponsor, please contact Kristianne Kurner at kristianne@newvillagearts.org.

**NVA IS A HOME FOR EVERYONE.
COME CELEBRATE WITH US.**

Programs Coming Soon

A WALK WITH YAAMAY

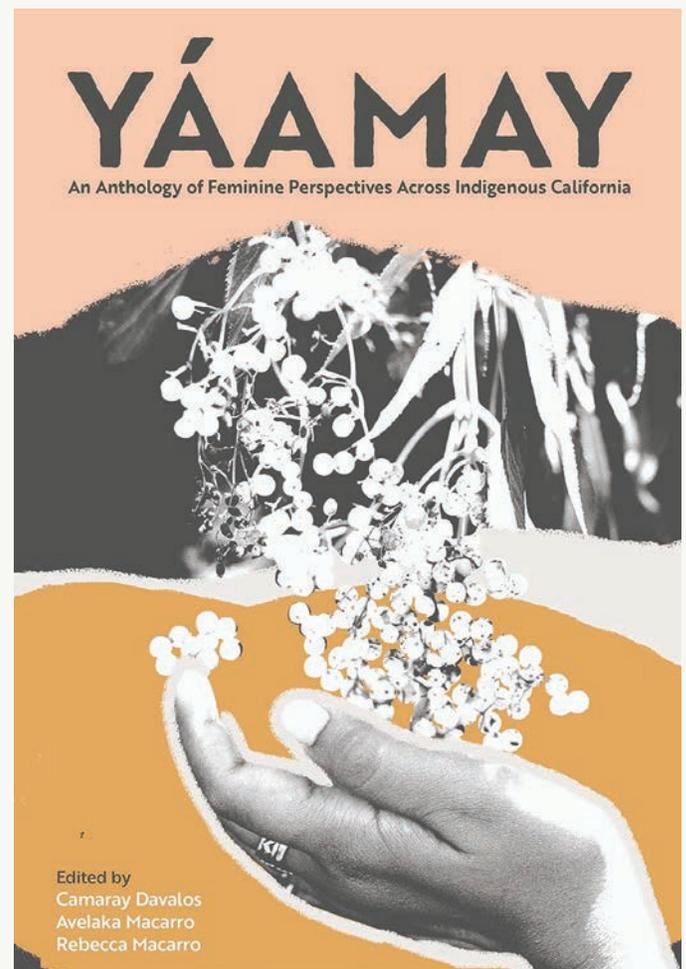
Sponsored by Parks California

New Village Arts will be partnering with Yáamay: An Anthology of Feminine Perspectives Across Indigenous California artists Camaray Davalos, Avelaka Macarro, and Rebecca Macarro to create a series of guided "art walks" in California State Parks and other local outdoor spaces. This project blends natural exploration with excerpts from the anthology — a collection of Indigenous poetry, artwork, and essays specific to what is now known as Southern California. These immersive walks will be led by poets, singers, and actors who will guide participants along curated trails, pausing at intentional stops for "moments of art."

FEELIN' GOOD PROGRAM

Sponsored by LB Charitable

Feelin' Good is a pilot prescriptive arts program designed to offer healing through arts and nature. Feelin' Good will focus on supporting individuals navigating mental health challenges, substance use disorders, and the distinct stresses experienced by veterans, active-duty military personnel, and women in recovery. Through a creative, holistic approach, Feelin' Good will offer clinicians and patients an innovative alternative or complement to traditional therapy and medication. Support from the LB Charitable Foundation will make it possible to pilot this incredible prescriptive arts and nature program. Together, we can create a happier and healthier North County, all while laying the groundwork for future expansion across all of San Diego County.





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